

Meeting of the Board of the Amateur Swimming Association (Swim England) Limited

20 February, 1pm

SportPark, Loughborough

Present:

Richard Hookway – RH (Chair)
Andy Salmon – AS
Aysha Kidwai – AK
Barry Saunders – Bsa
Bernard Simkins – BSi
Brian Havill – BH

Jane Nickerson – JMN
Joan Wheeler – JW
Katie Walcott – KW
Lois Jarvis – LJ
Neil Booth – NB

Apologies:

Ali Breadon – AB
Caroline Green – CG
Raj Kumar – RK

Officers in attendance:

Emma Griffin (Chief Operating Officer, item 10)
Hannah Foster (Executive Operations Manager)
Marie Cooper (People Development Director, item 12 and 13)

Invited:

Vijaya Panangipalli (Sport and Recreation Alliance)

1. Welcome and apologies

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed the members to the meeting and outlined the agenda.
- 1.2 RH provided background information about the Board evaluation process before introducing Vijaya Panangipilla (Sport and Recreation Alliance) as an observer of the meeting. Members introduced themselves and their role on the Board to Vijaya.
- 1.3 Apologies were received from RK, AB and CG.

2. Declarations of interest

- 2.1 The Regional roles of BSi, NB, BSa and JW were noted.
- 2.2 There were no further declarations of interest.

3. Minutes of the board meeting of ASA (Swim England) Ltd – 12 December 2023

3.1 There were no amendments and the minutes were taken as read and approved as a true and accurate record.

4. **Actions arising from previous meetings – to note progress**

4.1 Reference Action 07 - Committee overlaps: The Oversight Committee and ARP TORs have been redefined and aligned. The action is now complete.

4.2 Reference Action 08 – Clarify timeline for the Commercial Strategy: It was noted that the commercial strategy now consists of different commercial strands. AS and JMN have met to discuss commercial rights, highlighting there is more to progress in this area. AS will be joining the commercial working group as of next week.

4.3 Reference Action 17 – Regular meetings: Discussed during Action 07.

4.4 Reference Action 18 – Produce appraisal report: It was acknowledged that all Board appraisals have taken place. RH has shared the appraisal report, therefore the action is complete.

4.5 Reference Action 19 – Market share position plans: BH has circulated to members and the action was noted as complete.

4.6 Reference Action 20 – DIAP amendments: Outlined during item 12 on the agenda.

5. **Confirmation of decisions made by e-mail**

5.1 None.

6. **Chair's report**

6.1 RH provided a verbal update.

6.2 Regarding the recruitment for RK's successor, the Chair highlighted that they were seeking candidates with the relevant commercial skills and attributes. The advertisement went out directly to the market and also via a search agency. Applicants with various diversity strands were sought through networks and the search agency. Approximately six final candidates have been selected from the review of applications that contain a gender mix, all with commercial experience. A variety of candidates are directly or indirectly involved in the sport industry.

6.3 The first stage interviews are due to take place next week, following the second stage interviews in the first week of March. The Chair was hopeful that by mid-March a decision will have been made.

6.4 Members who are involved in the recruitment process offered their feedback by recognising applications were received from promising candidates. The short timeline for the recruitment process was noted, as well as highlighting a barrier for applicants who are seeking paid Board member opportunities.

6.5 The Board discussed skills matrixes to assist when appointing specific roles in the future.

6.6 **Action: BH to discuss skills matrixes with the Regional Chairs.**

7. **CEO's report**

7.1 The report was taken as read and the CEO provided an update.

- 7.2 It was agreed that due to JMN's departure, AS will review the strategy to set the KPIs and objectives for this year.
- 7.3 Members discussed the requirements of the Code for Sports Governance. It was identified that requirements are the same regardless of size or type of the club or organisation. JMN cannot foresee the governance requirements changing in due course.
- 7.4 It was noted that at present there is not a host for the 2026 Commonwealth Games. Therefore, Commonwealth Games England are looking at options should a host city not be secured, with the focus on being meaningful development.
- 7.5 Board members were made aware that the talent funding application has now been submitted. Swim England are presenting good alignment with British Swimming on the talent pathway.
- 7.6 CG will be sending a note to Board members regarding an ongoing issue that was discussed during the last Board meeting in December 2023.

8. **CFO's report**

- 8.1 The report was taken as read, BH provided members with an update.
- 8.2 JMN will be retiring from all Board positions on 29 February 2024. There are no anticipated Board meetings up to this date.
- 8.3 The CFO sought confirmation from members for AS to join the Boards of Swim England Trading, Enterprise Ltd. and the SEQ Board, and will be in attendance of the IoS Board meetings without being a member of the Board. Members were in agreement.
- 8.4 **Action: BH to develop a proposal of the Terms of Office for the IoS Board, for independent Board members.**
- 8.5 JMN noted that the market share has been discussed during the SEQ Board meeting, acknowledging competitors allow for quicker and cheaper avenues to attain qualifications. However, it was established that more insight is required.
- 8.6 Emma Griffin (Chief Operating Officer) will be bringing proposals to the SEQ Board to address the market share.
- 8.7 It was deemed that Swim England has lost several approved training centers, and the SEQ Board took a view this may be due to the lack of promoting the benefits of the whole package by potentially missing a narrative. The Board deliberated the narrative of potential consumers including target audiences and what they would be looking for as a customer.
- 8.8 Consequently, there was a recommendation to elicit a pilot qualification similar to those promoted by competitors, but this may have complications that need to be considered.

9. **Director of Legal's report**

- 9.1 The report was taken as read.
- 9.2 The full response to the recommendations has been sent to Mr Weston on 31 January for consideration. As of yet, Swim England has not received contact from

Mr Weston. Mr Weston will be providing a report to Sport England, which will be shared with Swim England during the first week of March.

9.3 A staggered approach was deliberated to ensure members are not given all information at once, to help them understand the rationale of prioritisation, and explain the implementation of actions. There was an agreement to elaborate *why* actions are taking place, emphasizing the importance of communication with Swim England audiences.

9.4 **Action: LJ to update the Board on the timelines via email.**

9.5 The Board considered the safeguarding report provided. The Chair raised a concern for the Board to be shown the categorisation of cases. A discussion took place acknowledging the difficulty in categorisation and time tracking. Members considered what details would be required at meetings regularly, to identify trends and reoccurring themes to put actions in place.

9.6 It was concluded that it would be beneficial to receive management information around categorisation to address emerging issues. This information is to be provided twice yearly by Kevin Suckling (Head of Safeguarding).

9.7 **Action: NB, AS and LJ to discuss how to manage the predicted rise in safeguarding cases.**

9.8 The CPSU audit took place on 5 December. This provided the outcome which was fully met. The CPSU provided positive feedback which was echoed by Sport England.

9.9 The approved Wavepower policy launch on 3 January 2024 which was followed up by the Safeguarding team delivering information sessions to members. The overall feedback was positive, with some resistance to change.

10. **Listening Report update**

10.1 Emma Griffin (EG), the Chief Operating Officer was welcomed to the meeting and the report was taken as read.

10.2 Feedback has been sent to The Behavioural Architects which is resulted in changes to point 2 and point 12a of the report. The changes were outlined to members. It was noted that this feedback was only in regard to factual or presentational detail and was in no way challenging any of the findings.

10.3 EG shared the publication details of the report with Board members and discussed the extensive stakeholder and employee engagement plan, confirming the commitment from the Senior Leadership Team.

10.4 **Decision: The Board unanimously approved the publication of the final report.**

10.5 The Board highlighted their full support, and offered their appreciation to EG and LJ for the listening work publication.

10.6 Members deliberated the response to recommendations detailed in the paper with the notion that it will shape the action plan.

10.7 It was noted that the Oversight Committee share the view of having an integrated and concise plan, instead of an extensive list of actions.

- 10.8 Board members discussed how this would be communicated to members to ensure it is easily understood by a variety of audiences whilst being inclusive to the reader, as well as what additional resources would be required to support this.
- 10.9 It was agreed to consult with British Swimming and the Home Nations, as driving a positive culture shift will not stop at geographical borders nor various talent pathways.

11. **Policy Approvals**

- 11.1 L1001 Complaints policy: The Board approved the amendments to the policy.
- 11.1.2 The Chair suggested a 'quick guide' to allow the policy to be comprehensible for users. LJ will be working with the digital team around a new webpage for the complaints and judicial processes.
- 11.2 PR101 Swim England Trading policy: The privacy policy specifically for Swim England Trading was approved by the Board.

12. **DIAP**

- 12.1 Marie Cooper (MC), People Development Director was welcomed to the meeting and the paper was taken as read.
- 12.2 MC highlighted that the DIAP would need to be provided to Sport England for governance purposes and therefore is seeking Board approval.
- 12.3 Amendments have been made from previous feedback which led to several drafts. Developments have now been streamlined and the action plan has been condensed. The plan within the document is on hold until the DIAP is able to be published.
- 12.4 It was acknowledged that there is work to do to increase completion rates.
- 12.5 MC confirmed the next steps of consultation, focusing on diversity profiles for regions, counties and clubs, and to assist clubs through various resources to complete the diversity profile.
- 12.6 Members discussed the data collection needed for the diversity profiling which included utilising existing channels to drive completion forward. Consideration into whether the baseline data in the DIAP is a representative sample must be taken into account. If it is not a representative sample, the data will be removed and state that there is an insight gap. In addition to explaining reasoning as to why we are collecting this data to members and stakeholders.
- 12.7 Several final amendments of the DIAP were outlined by the Board to MC.
- 12.8 **Decision: The Board approved the DIAP subject to the final amendments being made.**

13. **People Strategy**

- 13.1 MC gave an update to members of the Board.
- 13.2 As a part of governance code requirements, Swim England provide evidence to Sport England containing our People Strategy.

13.3 MC proposed to develop an overarching People Strategy covering two or three key priorities once the action plan from the listening work has been established.

13.4 The Board concluded that the business already has a lot of items in place that can be drawn together with the involvement of staff.

13.5 **Action: A working group is to be set up containing the CEO, KW and JW to assist MC with the People Strategy.**

14. **Committee / Working Group reports/meetings held since last meeting**

14.1 **Oversight Committee held 6 December 2023 and 9 February 2024**

14.1.1 NB provided an update.

14.1.2 The Oversight Committee suggested Swim England to merge all action plans to formulate one solidified plan to work from going forward.

14.1.3 The Senior Leadership Team have stated that a coach representative on the Committee would form part the action plan from the recommendations of the Listening report. An active discussion is to take place within the Oversight Committee.

14.2 **Nominations Committee held 15 December 2023 and 5 January 2024**

14.2.1 RH gave update.

14.2.2 The Committee meeting focused on the recruitment process for the replacement member which has been detailed earlier in the meeting.

14.3 **Swim England Qualifications held 5 December 2023 and 13 February 2024**

14.3.1 JMN provided an update.

14.3.2 To retain Ofqual compliance, a member of the Swim England Board will need to be appointed on the Board of SEQ. JMN suggested AS to be formally appointed. Members agreed with the proposal.

14.3.3 **Decision: The Board unanimously agreed for AS to be appointed on to the SEQ Board.**

14.3.4 At present Swim England are fully compliant with the Ofqual statement of compliance, and are currently waiting for further questions. There are no approved training centers under sanction, and only several internal administration errors which formed few malpractices.

14.4 **Sport Operations Committee held 28 November 2023 and 6 February 2024**

14.4.1 JW provided an update.

14.4.2 A review of SwimMark has commenced, intended to evaluate SwimMark to recognise if it can be simplified in any way. This will involve wide consultation with clubs.

14.4.3 One member has completed their 4 year term, and therefore the recruitment process has started in search of their replacement.

14.4.4 The Board praised the good results achieved in the World Aquatics Championships in Doha.

14.5 **Institute of Swimming Board held 30 November 2023**

14.5.1 The meeting minutes were taken as read. There were no further questions from the Board.

14.6 **Trading Board held 30 November 2023**

14.6.1 The meeting minutes were taken as read. There were no further questions from the Board.

14.7 **Audit, Risk and Probity Committee held 4 December 2023**

14.7.1 The meeting minutes were taken as read. There were no further questions from the Board.

15. **Dates for next meetings (2024)**

Monday 25 March	1pm – 4.30pm	(remote)
Monday 20 May (AGM)	7.30pm – 9.30pm	(remote)
Tuesday 21 May	11am – 6.30pm	(in person)
Tuesday 9 July	1pm – 4.30pm	(remote)
Tuesday 17 September	11am – 5pm	(in person)
Monday 16 December	1pm – 4.30pm	(remote)

16. **Any other business**

16.1 None recorded.

Summary of Decisions made

Minute	Item	Decision
10.4	Listening report update	The Board unanimously approved the publication of the final report.
11.	Policy Approvals	All presented policies and amendments were approved.
12.8	DIAP	The Board approved the DIAP subject to the final amendments being made.
14.3.3	Swim England Qualifications	The Board unanimously agreed for AS to be appointed on to the SEQ Board.